Chapter - 1

Introduction

Serving to language is the serving to mankind and a true Yeoman’s Service. Without the support of which it is impossible to imagine this world is language. History proves that when men started using signs and sounds to communicate, this world got the gift of change. Development is possible by sharing ideas and for that common language for communication is essential. Due to technological development there is a dire need of common language which can connect people of different languages. So a platform can be provided to the people of globe for sharing their ideas. Due to colonial past of Englishmen English language exists almost in every country of the world. Hence it can serve the purpose of mankind and in near future there is no substitute of English.

In every nation thousands of people which include students as well as professionals are learning English. When billions of people want to learn English as a second language they require some additional and nonconventional help from educationalists. Teaching a second language is a very challenging task for teachers because they have to adopt a new teaching method. A second language teacher requires systematic training to teach verity of learners. This research has potential to bring solution of many such problems. The dream of technological advancement came true with the help of language. This research checks feasibility of the use technology for language learning. It is a study how we can teach English as a second language easily with the help of computer technology.

In many foreign countries language laboratories are in use and they are of great help for second language students. This research shows a new direction of teaching English. In some institutes there are language laboratories but due to lack of proper training and knowledge labs are very rarely used. For English teachers this research opens new doors of successful, effortless and meaningful teaching. It also clarifies how to use lab properly. It suggests more efficient teacher is necessary for conducting lab sessions as one has to deal with teaching as well as technology.
A second language learner can be of different age group. So for language laboratory a trainer must adopt different teaching method. After research this study finds suitable method for teaching English as a second language through language lab. There is a comparison of two classes. One is taught English language through conventional method and other is taught in a language lab. Many teaching learning problems are checked and solved here. How human limitations can be resolved by computerized software and how technology can be used effectively by mankind and for mankind. How learners react to manual as well as computerized instructions and which one they understand well is also the point of study. It presents the importance of teacher and technology in teaching learning process.

Background of the research

A language is the source of knowledge. It has played a vital role in human evolution. Every culture is known by its language. Richness of a language considered as the richness that particular culture. Without language it is difficult to imagine present world. Since the beginning of human civilization language is the only source of exchanging knowledge and ideas. After the invention of wheel and transportation system people happen to meet people of different cultures and different languages. They respected each other’s culture and shown keen interest in their literature. Language is the only source to gaining knowledge.

Culture, beliefs, values and social structure of particular group of people can be studied through the study of language. If we study English Language we can see a great influence of Greek and Latin languages in it. Intellectual people of every age were attracted in second language learning. Scholars themselves accepted a task of studying the literature of a new language and translate it in local language for common people in order to bring new thoughts in the society. Common people didn’t need to learn a second language. Learning a second language was almost enthusiasm of researchers or a pleasing time pass for scholars.
At the time of Renaissance, number of books were translated into English. French, Latin and Greek scholars were highly respected for their knowledge. At that time second language learning might have started. The background of dictionary is the burning desire of learning a new language. First glossary came into existence and later on it took the shape of dictionary. The earliest dictionaries in the English language were glossaries of French, Italian or Latin words along with definitions of the foreign words in English. In the beginning the task was herculean even for scholars. Without any basic knowledge of any language how can we refer the books of second language?

After industrial revolution trade and transportation multiplied and in 21st century world became a global village. The development of Information and Communication Technology gave birth to multiculturalism. Usage of internet and mobile phones is increasing day by day. There is no nation which has no facility of radio, television, telephone, computer or internet. People want to get connected with each other crossing the boundaries of countries and languages. For that they use emails and messages. There is a large group of people using social networks like Facebook, Twitter and many more. People become more mobile physically and electronically. In this case second language learning became the key to success.

In late 20th century English emerged as an official language in number of countries. There are few reasons for it. In the middle of 19th century many international bodies have come into being, such as The UN, The World Bank (1945), UNESCO (1946), UNICEF (1946), WHO (1948), they strongly needed a common language for smoother functionality of work. Following quotation shows why English become common language of the world.

“The UN was established with five official languages – English, French, Spanish, Russian, and Chinese. There is now a wide spread view that it makes sense to try to reduce the number of languages involved in world bodies, if only to cut down on the vast amount of interpretation / translation and clerical work required. Half of the budget of an international organization can easily get swallowed up in translation costs… Common situation is one where all participants at an international
meeting automatically use a single language, as a utilitarian measure, because it is one which they have all come to learn for separate reason. This situation seems to be slowly becoming a reality in meetings around the world, as a general competence in English grows.”  (Crystal 12)

Application latter to resignation letter everything is to be submitted in English. Every man has to learn English as a second language for their bread and butter. For a common man it is too difficult to learn a new language as it is not their core area of concern. In short now all professionals have to learn English language as a part of their successful career. Slowly and gradually second language learning immerged as a problem.

Till the middle of twentieth century, learners were learning English language with their interest and for the sake of literature and culture only. So they were enjoying their learning. In last quarter of twentieth century a big mass got attracted to English for their tread and commerce. They thought that if they could learn English as a communicative language or a business language, they could have a chance to develop their business across the world. As English is becoming language of class it must be in an organized form. Some scholars started designing courses for second language learners, so that it can be taught professionally. British Broadcasting Corporation BBC started broadcasting English lessons for beginners. They used to post the learning material to interested and registered learners in advance and then they used to broadcast the lesson on given time. That was for the first time technology used for English teaching in a limited area.

In addition to this, experience of parents with English Language made English learning compulsory for 21st century students. Experienced parents insisted that their children must learn English language. Number of school boards of India made English Language a compulsory subject for students. This time it was not a communicative one but English as a second language. Some parents selected English language as the language of instruction for teaching their children. Now English became medium of instruction a second language but the teaching techniques adopted to teach English was the same old one. It is a fact that still in many schools English teachers are not even aware of method to teach a second language.
In the time of ICT, education is not untouched by revolution. Computer, internet and other facilities are taking their places in schools. Students were learning computer as a subject. Use of technology is not a new thing now. Teachers and technocrats were planning to use computer for language learning. Use of computer technology got a green signal from educational institutes. But the question is that how to use technology for language learning. Adding to this Carol A Chapelle a professor of TESL / Applied linguistic at Lowa State University writes in her book,

During the 1990s the question gradually changed from ‘should the computer be used in language teaching? to ‘How can the computer best be used in language teaching? As we enter the 21st century, everyday language through use is so tied to technology that learning language through technology has become a fact of life with important implication for all applied linguists, particularly for those concerned with facets of second language acquisition. (Chapelle 1)

Later on this discussion ended in the form of language lab. In the beginning it was on trial bases. But today it has a developed and a matured, purpose based form. So from the beginning the question, how to learn or teach second langue effectively exists. Here technology tries to fill the gap of knowledge.

**History of Language Lab Research**

In early modern period foreign language programmes were rising as a discipline in secondary schools and universities. Before this, classical languages like Latin and Greek were very popular languages. With the beginning of ICT in language classroom, the idea of the language lab was born. The purpose of language labs was to avail students listening exposure to the language they were studying. This was considered a significant innovation in the mid twentieth century, as it offered students the opportunity to hear the language they were studying in the voice of a native speaker. At that time, students had far fewer opportunities to travel. There was no such thing as the Internet. There was no foreign television programming. Today it is totally different. In today’s world everything
is up to date and digital. Audio exposure to any foreign languages is readily accessible at a very little to no cost. Satellite radio, Internet radio and podcasts are all available.

From designing syllabus to taking exams and solving issues, scholars have played a great role in this new venture. Various acronyms relating to technology and language teaching and learning show the research and development of language laboratories. In the beginning it was general, like CALI stands for Computer-Aided Language Instruction and CAL suggest Computer-Assisted Learning. This was the initial stage of Language lab. Finally focus came on language teaching and learning and some research done on how to relate language learning with computer. CALL – Computer assisted Language Learning became popular I 1980s. In 1990 TELL Technology Enhanced Language Learning provided more accuracy for language teaching but it was not so popular. Slowly and gradually it became the topic of general interest. Some software companies started taking interest in designing software for education. For example ESP - Educational Software Products is a renowned company which designs and produces educational software. Their motive is to produce novel and mostly interactive software for learners of English as a Foreign Language.

For the development of any field research is necessity. Brave people are those who selflessly work to turn the tide. Research has played an important role in the development of computer assisted language learning and removing antediluvian techniques and methods. Numbers of researchers have worked hard to show a new and more promising direction to language lab. Not only the domains of computer but applied linguistics and education faculties have also contributed in it. In the early phase of Language Lab, research mainly concentrated with expressing the advantage of using technology over traditional language teaching. Like other areas of second language learning different types of approaches are being used by language lab researchers. In the beginning majority of researchers were quantitative studies. At present qualitative and mixed-method studies also can be seen frequently.
We are living under the umbrella of computer mediated communication (CMC). As we know that there no authorized standards for Language Lab oriented it is very hard to come up with sound findings. It covers a huge range of areas. So many different theories and disciplines made it hard to decide such norms for this type of research. Where there is a will there is a way is true in many cases. Following are such researchers who pave the new way. They are torch barrier of this field.

Dr. J H Hulstijn of University van Amsterdam is a researcher of this field who finds remarkable facts related to second language acquisition and use of laboratories. In a special issue of Studies in Second Language Acquisition featuring such research, he made a notable distinction between two types of studies (1) Laboratory studies pertinent to theories of SLA and (2) Applied studies such as investigations into computer assisted language learning. Both types are among a growing body of research which investigates theory – based prediction of the effects of specific psycholinguistic conditions on learning outcomes. He also warns that, without supplementary investigation in real L2 learning environments, a researcher should be extremely vigilant in designing immediate conclusion from laboratory oriented studies to language pedagogy.

Professor Peter Skehan was a Professor of Applied Linguistics at Thames Valley University from 1991-1999 and later at King’s College, London from 1999-2003. He moved to Hong Kong in 2004 where he was Professor in the Department of English, CUHK until his retirement in 2009. His vast experience in second language acquisition field is useful to up skill young researchers. He has lion’s share in investigating learners’ oral language in face to face communication during tasks in which meaning is the primary focus. There remains much scope for applying the principles of task condition research to computer assisted research tasks requiring either or both oral and written language.

A well known and profound expert of second language acquisition is Carol Chapelle. She is a Professor of TESL/applied linguistics and Chair of Linguistics as well; she is also Vice-President of the American Association for Applied Linguistics. Her
research investigates questions pertaining to computer technology and applied linguistics. After her deep rooted research she suggests that 21 century has to host collaborative development of infrastructure for large scale use by the profession and research essential for development of theories of language assessment and acquisition.

Recently in 2010 a researcher of The University of Edinburgh completed who has completed PhD in Collaborative Autonomous English Language Learning in CALL observes that technology helps students to become accustomed to the educational use of recent technology and practice their language in a more effective and productive way. All these researchers are concerning to connect technology with education. Their research always ended with a new hope for development. Still today only countable books are available pertaining to this field. Mostly young researchers take the help of research papers of seniors. Some research has been done in field of history of language laboratories and types of language laboratories. They left no stone unturned but still how to use language lab effectively for second language lab is to be answered.

**Statement of the Problem**

‘Role of English Language Laboratories in Teaching English as a Second Language: A Study’

If we start from the first step of language learning a child learns language through a natural process of constant listening and repeating words and phrases. Interactions with biological, sociocultural and environmental entity also play its role in language learning process. Parents start with basic sounds, and then move to words using visual signals to prompt repetition of the verbal sounds. A child acquires language skills step by step. It is chronologically Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Listening prompts baby for speaking. For three to four years a child increases vocabulary and speaking skill. Listening and speaking skills run parallel and reading leads to writing. It means a child will speak what one listen from people around.

In case of second language teaching totally reverse steps are being followed. In conventional English class we start with writing alphabets then reading a language and at last we force a learner to speak language. Listening is the first and very basic skill which
opens the doors of language learning, is mostly being ignored in English language teaching process. It is scientifically proved that a child start acquiring listening skill in the womb of one’s mother, before birth. So how can we close our eyes to such a significant skill? Very few English teachers use English language as a medium of instruction in English class. To teach learners how to use the language is as important as teaching the language itself. Second language learning is an intrapersonal and interpersonal process of meaning making.

It is known fact that a listener listen the message then decodes the message and then reply. First of all there will be intrapersonal communication, than interpersonal communication and at last the result will be again intrapersonal communication. Language learning is a process of interacting with people through various senses. One has to response through words or through eyes or through various gestures. It is not one side game. After listening someone it is must to reply. If we are unable to speak or listen effectively it affects to one’s social as well as professional life.

Here the gape of knowledge regarding second language teaching is clearly visible. All most every teacher starts English language teaching with grammar but the first language is acquired without any direct knowledge of grammar. A child develops mother tongue by constant listening. After listening a language one needs to converse with someone for speaking practice. This is all what should be but what generally happens is different from the desired picture. One more important aspect is different students learn English with different purposes. Like collegians learn for good marks, businessmen learn for promotion, many a youngsters learn it go aboard, children learn as a subject to pass, housewives learn English to teach their children where as some retired people learn English as a time pass.

The problems of learning another language are numerous. Yet millions have achieved some degree of fluency in, at least one other language. Those who got impressive command and fluency they got it through dedicated and consistent effort over a long period of time. The more disciplined and systematic way to learn English is found in the form of language lab. In support to this Ansari says…
As far as the implications of technology for second language learning and teaching contexts are concerned, evidence suggests that technological tools can actually help in enhancing the quality of input and in providing more relevant and useful feedback. The effectiveness of technology on language learning would also depend on how it is used. Certain technologies are more suitable than others for certain kinds of learning task and for certain kinds of learners. Therefore research on appropriate ways and contexts of technology use is called for. (Ansari 5)

Due to gap of knowledge language laboratories are setup in educational campuses only. There are public libraries for common people but there is no language laboratory for public. A lab trainer must know some technicalities for smooth conduction of lab. The problem is that many trainers are not technically trained to deal with ICT as in their time such facility was not available. English teachers don’t know computer and computer experts don’t know English language. Trainer has to learn the basic operation of computer and have to acquire command over it. So in the beginning being familiarize with computer and software becomes primary concern and teaching language becomes secondary for trainer. That’s why institutions have to hire people who are not only English teachers but also are good at computer.

An important fact is the difference of generation. Teachers and students in number of countries have a remarkable age difference. In primary schools it is on large scale and at college level at quite small scale. The difference is clearly visible in common thinking pattern and in the use of technology. It is doubtless that in many cases learners are more knowledgeable in using technology than trainers. Young generation uses technology for every little work. It does not bother them to search date from internet, mailing or downloading. They can use technology effectively, whereas it is a tiresome task for many teachers. Teachers have to match their feet with students otherwise in this technological era they will soon found outdated. A researcher named Linda W Braun uses the phrases ‘Native Technology Users’ for today’s generation. She talks about this aspect of difference like this
“Any 13 year old in the year 2006 lives in a world that has includes technology for his or her entire life. The first home computer game Pong, was released 21 years before the teenager was born. These are teens who have used technology in all aspect of their lives including learning, playing and socializing. Technology is native and natural to them.” (Braun 79)

The final step of teaching learning process is evaluation. It must be in the format in which we teach students. Few years back teacher used to take oral as well as written test. So a learner get chance to present his knowledge clearly either in written or in oral form. When we teach a second language we need to check all four skills of that language. It is very difficult in conventional class. Whereas we teach second language on computer so how can we evaluate them on paper? It is not possible as well as practical to take listening and speaking test one to one. The question for a trainer is that, how to make a compatible computerized test. Computerized evaluation is only possible with some technical support. To evaluate this point I can say that this research field is a newly planted sapling which requires water by educators, fertilizer by technocrats and love and time by young researchers.

Hypotheses

1. If we use ICT in teaching ELT can be improved.

2. If we teach LSRW skills in a sequence, a second language learner can learn English properly.

3. If visualization technique is adopted learners can retain content for longer time.

4. Language Lab can replace language teachers.

5. If trainer uses language lab ESL learners develop faster compare to traditional class.
**Objectives**

(1) To find out a faster and effective way of teaching English as a second language.

(2) To define the right utilization of Language Lab.

(3) To check the effectiveness of visualization and audio listening in ELT.

(4) To define the use of English Language Laboratories in teaching communication and Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing skills.

(5) To define the use of English Language Laboratories in teaching grammar, vocabulary.

(6) To find an effective way to improve pronunciation.

**Variables**

I. Independent Variable

The independent variable in this study was teaching of English language through digital language laboratory to improve English language comprehensively.

II. Dependent Variable

The dependent variables in this study were the pre-test and post-test scores that measured effect of English language lab teaching with traditional classroom teaching to ESL learners of first Sem. - Saurashtra University.

**Method of the research**

We can bifurcate lab oriented research in two parts; (1) Software development (2) Human development. They both are inter related and dependant on mutual responses. In first one, researchers try to find essential changes in currently available software. They intend to bring change in English language teaching through soft content development. In the second type, researchers focus on human development. They study how effective is
the software is in second language teaching. I tried to use computer technology for effective teaching. For the design of research Dale Griffee rightly says…

“As a blueprint is to building a house, a research design is to conducting a research project. The research design stipulates the parts of the research project, how they are arranged, and how they function. However, the research design does not determine the type of data, how the data are collected, or how they are analyzed any more than a blueprint tells a house builder the color of the walls or what furniture will occupy its various rooms.” (Griffee 44)

As language classrooms are specially constructed to bring about learning, it is not unreasonable to collect data for adding to our knowledge of language learning and use. Language lab oriented research is divided in various types like Pedagogically Motivated research, Psycho-linguistically Motivated Research, Ethnographic Research etc. In the Pedagogically Motivated research the aim of research is to find how learners handle software. They also started to focus on some of the question about learners’ reaction to software and measuring features of reflection strategies. In Psycho-linguistically – Motivated one, researchers try to assess learners’ inter-language samples tasks. They get these samples through the observation of learner’s language knowledge and linguistic process. For that they have cognitive process to access language knowledge and meta-cognitive strategies. The Ethnographic Research of Language lab can give data about learner’s communication and learning in view of the absolute context.

Here I have studied about how teaching learning activity takes place in two classes. The focus of study is how classroom environment and technology used can affect in a second language class. One class is traditional second language English class and the other is language lab. The topic for both the class is same. I have pointed out how students respond to a same topic in two differently set classrooms. How technology affects in teaching learning process? Which environment is suitable and beneficial for
students? Through experimental research it can be answered in best way. I have presented important facts related to role of language lab in second language teaching with the SPSS software for analysis.

Students selected for the research will be purposively chosen. There will be a compression of two groups. The students will be of Saurashtra region of Gujarat state. They are first semester Saurashtra University total 50 in numbers. They are equally divided in the group of 25. One group for traditional English as a second language class and the other will be for English language lab. They are of same educational stream so that their mental level is likely equal. I have checked it through pretest. The language lab software I have used for this study is Words Worth English Language Lab software which is made by ACTUNIVE company and has a very good market throughout India.

**Significance and scope of the Study**

It is rightly said that ‘heard melodies are sweet but unheard are sweeter.’ This field of research is mostly remains untouched. So I tried to unfold few aspects of language lab. After the invention of any technology, it takes years to avail it to the people. And even more time to wide spread it to end user. In the beginning language lab was limited for the learners of developed countries. With the passage of time it entered in developing countries. At present in India, metro cities and several educational hubs have the facility of language lab. Current scenario is very fast and result oriented.

The condition of English language in India is very strange. We find variety of pronunciation according to the state dialect. A common sentence spoken by a South Indian, a Bangoli, a Panjabi or a Gujarati will sound different. Local teachers can’t identify the mistake properly as they are also from the same region. Even teachers have various Englishes. Here human limitation affects in teaching English as a second language.

The only way to spread commonly understandable English is Language lab. To teach error free English, software can work magically. As every thing is computerized
and programmed by experts there are very less chances of any kind of error. The world is changing at a rapid pace. Learning methods are changing. How we teach and evaluate learning is also changing. Old, authoritarian models are giving way to gentler, more collaborative models. Students are as hungry as they ever were to be guided, coached and mentored. The difference now is that they have that world at their fingertips. They are experiencing the world through technology in a way that their parents and teachers never did.

Today’s language classroom is vastly different from that of the mid- to late twentieth century. The focus is no longer on grammar, memorization and learning from rote, but rather using language and cultural knowledge as a means to connect to others around the globe. Geographical and physical boundaries are being transcended by technology. Students are very much interesting to adopt technology. Like technocrats are making user friendly products teachers have to teach in learner friendly way. After the strong recommendation of AICTE and NACC many colleges set language labs on their campus but plenty of them remain unused due to lack of skilled trainers. After this research trainers who are puzzled regarding lab and its functionality will get solution of their confusions related to teaching and regarding software also. At town places and villages, where language lab is an imagination, this study shows a path for good English teaching. The study will certainly be able to bridge the gap of knowledge prevailing in English teaching.

In 21st century mankind is moving to perfection. As we know small things bring perfection but perfection is not a small thing. Training is the only way to develop good professionals. For over all development systematic instruction is very important. People are developing their business worldwide, for that they require manpower with some special ability. It involves good command over international language like English, proper personality, soft skills and communication. With the medium of language lab it is possible to avail all this skills under one umbrella. Here one can get training according to one’s need. A trainer can train a learner about some gestures to use while communicating, some nonverbal communication and greetings which are used in different part of the
world. Writing skill can be easily improved and letter writing, resume writing, making proposals and other things can be improved which are professionally helpful. Most global organizations value workers with a good basic education and qualification and at the same time they place greater value on people who are technically strong while well grounded in the soft skills.

**Contribution of the research**

If we think about Indian context, teachers have to teach in overcrowded class. While teaching English it is not possible to clear each and every concept of language as students are of great variety. This research helps in improving efficiency of language lab and clarifies the role of second language teacher. Language lab can help learner as well as teachers in great way. Students will be divided in various groups according to their level. In many institutes language labs are liability. This research will convert them in to asset by making them more result oriented.

The purpose of any research is betterment in related field. Here the field is very valuable, education field. The value can be understood by the fact that government of India spares very huge amount for education. After defense, education is the second to get much attention. Still result is not satisfactory. Countless students have to attend spoken classes after their graduation. Number of students remains jobless due to their poor English. This research will make English Language education better and fruitful.

We can divide the English of the current time in two parts. One is learning the language and second is learning about language. Learning a language means the practical use of language. It teaches in which conditions we can apply language for communication. Really it is useful for every language learner. Actually any one starts language learning to use the language but at the end a learner gathers many things about language but not the language. Learning about language means to learn about grammar before learning a language. In conventional class we follow the second one, teacher emphasis too much on grammar when it is not need. That’s why we can’t see result of language teaching. A student starts learning English from 5th standard when one is a child.
to graduation as a young person but no remarkable change can be observed. A language lab can provide English language teaching is the first way; learning the language. This research can change the life of Indian youth by giving practical way of teaching English.

Language lab is not limited only for language teaching. There many benefits of establishing a language lab. It can train learners in the fields like soft skills and personality development also. It has been observes that many young graduates remains unemployed due to lack of professional skills. Today technology is in highly advance stage. Skype, Moodle, Facebook, What’s up, Wikipedia, Twitter, Blogs, Vodcast and Podcast are the real examples of it. They are becoming more popular and getting grip on society. LinkedIn a social network is known for its professional approach for educational and industrial groups. Here exports can share their views with other experts and get good complements of solution of the problem sitting at home. At present mobile technology for learning is definitely in. It’s called MALL Mobile Assisted Language Learning. Educational institutions welcomed technology for language teaching with open arms. They used various software prepared by software companies and use for class teaching. After a few months teaching exports gave their findings about it. Schools and colleges of many countries have started using iPod in classroom teaching. In such institutes students come without any books. They get their books in their iPod and further more people are moving to ICALL that is Intelligent Computer assisted Language Learning. Hence this is the right time for advancement in language lab research.

In India we always think about others as we believe in ‘sarve bhavantu sukhinah’. As English language has a very comprehensive hold all over the world, this study will not only help student on India but also all the students of the world. Following lines prove that point “Education officials classify some 5.1 million students in the United States — 1 in 10 of all those enrolled in public schools — as English language learners, a 60 percent increase from 1995 to 2005.” (Thompson) English Language learners are increasing day by day. There is a dearth of English classes and teachers. In this crucial time this research can help a lot.
References


